

His Backyard Hobby Is Bees

"I'm just a backyard hobbyist," claims Joe Migliaccio, who keeps three hives of 250,000 bees each in his backyard on Ripley Road.

Migliaccio keeps over two million bees in all, with eight additional hives dispersed throughout Cohasset. It is an avocation that is a one-day-a-week job. There are side benefits, though — in the form of honey.

The ultimate end to Migliaccio's beekeeping means is the honey which he sells all year long. The *Mariner* visited at the bees peak honey making season and watched as they milled around Migliaccio's backyard gathering nectar.

"The workers all have a job," Migliaccio said referring to the bees that were busily roving between flowers and the hives. These were Italian honeybees, he explained, and comprising a hive are workers, drones and a queen bee.

The bees, governed by instinct and communication with the rest of the hive, may travel as far as two and a half miles before returning to the hive with news of a nectar source. Although the life span of the bees is a matter of weeks, except for the queen which can live up to two years, the hive population is easily replenished. The queen bee can lay 1000 to 2000 eggs a day and therefore insures a constant crop of workers.

Migliaccio calls beekeeping "a very expensive hobby" and

explained that it costs approximately \$150 to get set up with one hive. He now makes his own boxes for the hives, retrieves swarms bothering neighbors to replenish his supply, and of course, sells honey to defray expenses for his hobby.

Migliaccio "smoked" his largest hive to allow the *Mariner* photographer to get a picture of the bees making a withdrawal from a tray of honey. "The bees think the hives are on fire and will automatically go to the honey and fill up with it. In case they had to abandon the hive they fill themselves with enough to last for a few days," he said. Although he noted that he had never been seriously bitten by the bees, he made sure to protect himself with the smoker, a full-length suit, a head net and gloves.

Because it is the height of the season, the tray Migliaccio displayed was almost full of honey, and had filled within a week. He averages 50 pounds of honey per hive annually, he said, while leaving the bees 60 pounds to feed off.

Migliaccio, who works for Marshfield Sand and Gravel as his full-time occupation, mentioned some of the other accomplishments of bees, aside from their honey making capabilities. His bees have also been used for pollinating cranberry bogs and in the treatment of people with arthritis.

Although the season got off to a slow start because of all the rain, things sure seemed to be buzzing over at Joe Migliaccio's last week.



BEE-MEISTER of Ripley Road is Joe Migliaccio, checking on his flying friends. [Greg Derr photo]

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Recreation Report

ZOO MOBILE

On Monday, July 23, the MDC Traveling Zoo Mobile will visit the Osgood playground from 10 a.m. until noon. The Playground Programs will meet as scheduled and will visit the Zoo Mobile. All residents are invited to view the Zoo Mobile between 11 a.m. and 12 noon. There is no charge for admittance.

FILM SERIES

Remember: Thursday, July 19, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall — "Great Expectations" ends at 9:25 p.m.

On Thursday evening at 7:30 in Town Hall July 26, the fourth movie of the season will be shown. It is entitled "Captains Courageous." Rudyard Kipling's classic novel about the adventures of a spoiled rich boy on a Gloucester fishing schooner. The movie stars Freddie Bartholomew, Spencer Tracy, and Lionel Barrymore and is directed by Victor Fleming. Younger children must be accompanied by an adult or responsible, older sibling. Children should be picked up this week at 9:25 p.m. sharp!

BAND CONCERTS

The third in a series of six concerts on the Common will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 24. The 30-piece South Shore Concert Band will be performing. There may be an additional seventh band concert given by the United States Navy this summer. Please watch local news media for particulars.

6-12 YEAR OLD FIELD TRIP

On Tuesday, July 24, the 6-12 year old playground group will be taking a field trip to Drumlin Farm, Lincoln, Massachusetts. Drumlin Farm offers children an experience in nature and nature studies which is probably unparalleled. A pre-registration will be mandatory and reservations will not be accepted after Monday, July 16. There will be a minimal fee.

The four and five year olds will also take a field trip July 31, to the Trailside Museum in Milton. Details will be announced next week. There will be a minimal fee.

SAND CASTLE CONTEST

On Wednesday, July 25, beginning at 9 a.m. at Sandy Beach, the Cohasset Recreation Department will conduct a Sand Castle Contest. There will be four age groupings: pre-school up to age 5; 6-8 year olds; 9-12 year olds, and 12 years and over. Ribbons will be awarded for first and second prize in each group. Children may do individual castles or group castles. There will be separate classifications for group and individual work.

Children may bring shovels, buckets, pails, etc. but all adornments must be natural. Parents must accompany and be responsible for children. The event will last approximately one-and-a-half hours. Ribbons will be awarded on the basis of creativity and workmanship. The rain date is Thursday, July 26, 9 a.m.